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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 000055

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FSINFATC FOR SPAS/POL - BILL INGRAM AND HAITHAM AL-MUSSAWI
DEPT FOR EAP/ANP - DAN RICCI

E.O. 12985: N/A

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SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND NOMINATION FOR FSN POLITICAL
TRAINING COURSE, APRIL 3 - 14, 2006

REF: (A) STATE 02153; (B) 05 WELLINGTON 549

1. Embassy Wellington submits the following nomination for the FSN Staff Political Training Course to be held in Washington from April 3 - 14, 2006.

2. Name: Craig Brian Greaves

Grade: 9 Step 2.

Length of Service: Start date - May 16, 2005.

English language ability: level 4 (native speaker).

Time spent in the U.S.:

November 1998: Washington DC. Purpose: Brief period before travelling to Bosnia to work for a DC-based research and polling firm (Greenberg Research Inc).

December 1998 - March 1999: Washington DC. Purpose: Internship with lobbying firm.

February 2000: San Francisco. Purpose: One week personal vacation.

Previous training in the U.S.: None.

Previous nomination for political training course: July 14, 2005.

3. Narrative:

Craig Greaves has demonstrated exceptional talent and skills as a Locally Employed Staff member (LES) who covers political issues for Embassy Wellington's Political-Economic Section. Craig reported on New Zealand's political parties and leaders in advance of national elections on September 17, 2005, as well as on the four weeks of complex negotiations that followed, leading to the formation of a coalition government. Having worked previously in the New Zealand Parliament, he has provided us with invaluable insights into the government and access to leading decision makers. He has helped advise and support our new Ambassador. He has served as the control officer for a visit by a Congressional staff delegation. Craig has exceeded expectations for an incoming LES and is expected to deliver bigger dividends to the Embassy's mission in the years to come.

Political training would build upon Craig's considerable skills by refining his drafting and interviewing techniques -- essential to doing his job. In particular, training would help Craig understand the needs of U.S. government policymakers and would allow him to make informed choices on what political developments in New Zealand should be reported to Washington. While U.S.-New Zealand relations are good overall, the two governments differ on many issues of concern to the United States. Meeting with the desk officer and other U.S. government representatives would give Craig a broader understanding of the U.S. perspective on such issues.

We also expect Craig will widen his contact with key New Zealand decision makers, and training would help him better represent U.S. policy here.

Training would help Craig fill a gap in Embassy Wellington's reporting capabilities. Our reporting load has increased significantly with the elimination of SEP. We increasingly are relying on Craig to produce our political reports. In fact, Craig's position was created in recognition of the increased burden on the three-officer Political-Economic Section. While an FTE has been approved for a new mid-level officer for the section, we plan to drop this request, given our good fortune of hiring Craig. Craig is the first Embassy LES to perform this extensive reporting role, and no Wellington LES has ever taken this training course. Craig is hard working, a fast study and unfailingly considerate. We think he would be a great asset to the class. He works closely with other LES who support the Ambassador and our Public Affairs Section: For example, he collaborated with our Public Affairs LES in fashioning our response to negative reports in the New Zealand media and in writing a speech for the Ambassador. We know that he would share with them

the knowledge and skills gained from this training.

In quick fashion, Craig has become an indispensable part of Embassy Wellington's Political-Economic Section. The Ambassador and the DCM strongly support his nomination and firmly believe Craig's immediate participation in this course will significantly advance the Mission's objectives.

Burnett